

BANNER



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NO. 17.

LITERARY.

For the Banner of Progress. My Spirit Babe.

BY FANNY GREEN M'DONALD.

Unopened Bud of Life! O, can it be,
This lovely Form is all there is of thee?
Lingered no Sister Essence in the air
To light and gladden a shrine so fair?
Ah, was the Soul crushed in that dire embrace,
When Birth and Death were gathered face to face?

A Spirit hovered near thee, to invest
The human all engrossed in the Divine.
Lingered until the Shrouded Angel came,
To smother, ere it burned, the young life-flame.
Then gathered up its pious fair and free,
For the fresh dawn of its Eternity.

O, then, I am not childless! Thou art gone
Where angel nurses bear thee. Thy first morn
Broke fair in Heaven. This yearning heart shall find thee,
And to itself only the closer bind thee,
For such brief separation. Go, my child,
From this bleak Earth, where thou hast never smiled!

The sweet maternal office still is mine,
The human all engrossed in the Divine.
By the clear words of Truth my hand shall lead thee,
And from the Fount of Living Goodness feel thee,
Through all the Courts of Heaven my ear shall greet
The bounding music of thy little feet.

These mute lips never shall utter baby moans,
But purest gladness, breathed in dulcet tones,
Shall first awake their sweetness. Love shall teach
To thee the music of an angel's speech,
When from this curving mouth sweet words shall part,
With a deep blessing for thy mother's heart.

Then shall I seek, through all those grottoes fair,
Rich "Gems of Life," to crown thy flaxen hair;
And all the beauty of these soft blue eyes,
That wake not here, shall brighten Paradise;
And O, what rapture, in their light to find
Unfolding all the eloquence of mind!

I give to thee a name I love the best,
Before they lay thee in the place of rest;
For thou to me an actual being art,
Dear undeveloped Blossom of my Heart!
Where angels breathe, in Heaven's mild atmosphere,
The beauties re-expand that withered here.

Once more in these hallowed arms I hold thee;
Once more to this love bosom I enfold thee,
My First-Born and my Precious! For I know
The time has come when even this must go.
Yet, tell me not my clinging hope is vain:
My child—my only one—we meet again!

I am denied one living, warm caress;
Yet these cold liniments have power to bless,
When lit with such sweet hope, such joy divine,
To think thou art—thou wert—forever mine.
A higher love unlocks my clasping hand—
I will not keep thee from the Spirit Land!

Where still for us new paths of life shall open,
Fair daughter of my promise and my hope!
No barriers to our progress shall be found,
Scattered abroad o'er all that heavenly ground,
But "aids of joy shall crown the chastening rod
With life as deep, as infinite as God!

COMMUNICATIONS.

"OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN."

Such is the commencement of a form of petition in the New Testament, popularly known as the "Lord's Prayer"; although, why it should ever have been dignified with such a title I am at a loss to imagine, and commentators are silent. If it be true, as the Biographers of Jesus assert, that he recommended that form of prayer to his disciples, it should more properly be called the prayer of the disciples. At any rate, I can find no record of Jesus ever having used any such form for himself, and I think it very questionable whether so great a Progressionist as the man of Nazareth ever instructed or counseled his followers to address the Deity in such a strain of inconsistent, contradictory, and incomprehensible language as we find embodied in that petition.

After addressing the Deity as "Our Father which art in Heaven," (as if God were confined to a special locality,) it goes on to express a full and entire acquiescence in all that He has done, or is about to do, namely, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." After this expression of perfect resignation to God's will, in the very next sentence is a request that He would attend especially to our bodily wants, and see that we have our daily allowance of food! Now if we are perfectly satisfied to let God's will be done in the matter, why ask Him to give us that which Nature constantly supplies through her eternal and unchangeable laws?

Again, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." How many professing Christians, do you suppose, would be satisfied to have meted out to them the same measure of charity and forgiveness they extend to those who have injured or offended them? Would they accept or reject the measure if left free to choose? "Lead us not into temptation." Here, we ask the Deity, whose attributes are perfection, to "lead us not into temptation"! As much as to say, "Lord, we are bad enough at best, therefore don't make us any worse by enticing us into bad company, for if you lead, we may follow to our shame." "But deliver us from evil." Why? What reason can we assign for asking God to "deliver us from evil"? Why, the most potent and logical

reason that can be given. Because "thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever"! In other words, because God's kingdom is *His own*, and *never will belong to any one else!* Logical, certainly!

Messrs. Editors—I don't wish it to be understood that I am one of those who ridicule all forms of prayer and supplication; for I fully believe in the efficacy of an earnest and pure aspiration, reaching outward and upward after truth; and I also believe that such aspirations will be, in a measure, answered, as sure as there is truth in the philosophy of the laws of attraction. I do not, however, believe it to be consistent to ask God to bestow upon us that which we, as free actors, would instantly reject; neither do I believe there is any sense in a form of supplication that prays a *perfect Being to do no harm*.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed."
And, as such, I hold it sacred; and any sentiment or idea, that is antagonistic to our best sense of right, I hold to be worth just whatever value can be shown for it, by the unfailing standard of Reason. Yours truly, INDEX.

PERSONAL.

EDITORS BANNER.—In my answer to your queries on the late conversion of a Spiritualist (which, by the way, was not intended for publication), I had no idea of reflecting on the candor of the friends interested. Mr. Maclay is an estimable gentleman; and however we may differ on an issue, wherein I think his zeal outruns his better judgment, his denunciation of it is doubtless the result of an honest conviction. A temperate and kind discussion, with earnest men, will elicit that for which all such are searching—Truth.

Respectfully, A. Y. E.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM VERMONT.

WOODSTOCK, Vt., March 14, 1867.

Near eight years ago, in the town of St. Johnsbury, Vt., I formed the acquaintance of a Universalist minister, by the name of Marston, a fine looking, well educated, and well appearing man. He was settled over a very good society in number and intelligence. I had met him at temperance meetings on several occasions, and our liberal views made us soon quite well acquainted.

Some time after, Mrs. A. W. Sprague came to our village to speak upon Spiritualism. And desiring all liberal-minded persons to have an opportunity to hear the "glad tidings," I sent a note informing him and inviting him to be present, as an opportunity would be given to all to question, and also to present subjects for a song and a discourse, as that was usually her course. I received an answer in very bad temper, assuring me that he had no wish to follow after "strong women" and "seducing spirits"; that Christ was all the medium authority he wanted—giving me quite a lecture and ridiculing the idea.

Mrs. Sprague lectured to the enjoyment and satisfaction of nearly the whole town, (priest and priest-ridden excepted). Many of his church became very much interested. I think she was invited to occupy his pulpit one evening, which displeased him very much. I was soon informed that he was preparing a discourse to counteract the spiritual excitement that had arisen on account of Mrs. Sprague's lectures in town; and he had hinted to his friends a wish that he might have a full house of friends and foes. I was especially invited to be present. I traveled three miles purposely to hear him. His introduction was reading the account of St. Paul's conversion, and arguing with his brethren in their temples. He then rehearsed all the newspaper stories that were circulated of Spiritualism in our early days, and closed by charging all the phenomena as coming from evil spirits, led by the devil. This was so absurd for a Universalist to call to his aid a devil and devilish spirits! I arose at the end of the sermon and asked the privilege of making a few remarks. To my astonishment, and that of the whole congregation, I was ordered to "sit down." "It was not my meeting, but his meeting, and he would not be so disturbed." I then remarked, I had no thought nor wish to disturb him, but being acquainted with his liberal views, I thought that Brother Marston would be as liberal as St. Paul's brethren were with him, as he had read this morning that Paul was allowed in the synagogue three days to argue his belief. Before I had half completed this sentence, Brother Marston rushed down the pulpit stairs and half way across the house, pale as a ghost, and appeared very angry. I then apologized and sat down. One only caught the minister's contagion and left in double-quick. There the poor man stood, without any just reason or apparent sympathy in the house for his awkward place. He had left the desk in perfect fury—stood pale and trembling. After a little time for reflection, and to realize his unenviable position, he coolly inquired "if his services were any longer needed in that desk, and if he was to be disturbed in his ministerial duties?" The audience seeing his unhappy position, and anxious to relieve him,

Col. Arndt arose, and, swinging his hand as a signal to go back to the desk, grunted out, very indistinctly, "Guess 't there wouldn't be any disturbance." The unfortunate man was relieved. His countenance changed. Assuming a meek and pious look, he slowly moved back to the pulpit. He read his hymn, and it was sung. Then, assuming a very sanctimonious face, and turning his eyes upward, extending his assumed holy hands, he said, "You will receive the blessing." A more ridiculous farce I never witnessed. The whole congregation dropped their eyes, in a cold sweat. Then, turning to me in a very flippant way, he said, "If the gentleman has anything to say, now is his time; my meeting is closed."

I commenced by saying I was thankful even at this opportunity, and hoped the audience would listen to me a few minutes for an explanation. I then stated I had been somewhat acquainted with Universalists—their views and free meetings. In 1833 I had serious impressions of fitting myself for the pulpit. I commenced a regular course of reading and study with the Rev. J. D. Williams, in Albany, New York. In those days the prominent ones—Skinners, Stroeters, Ballous—challenged all other ministers for public discussions. Nothing suited them better than an open field and public fight. I never heard of an instance before where a Universalist minister prohibited remarks after their discourse. If it had been a Congregationalist, Presbyterian, or Baptist meeting, I should not have spoken without first asking permission. But the Methodists have ever been charitable enough to grant directed free speech. I had not thought of disturbing any one; and had our brother been like Christ, or John Murray, there would have been no disturbance. I remarked that I arose expressly to speak of the Christian-graces—Faith, Hope, and Charity—and without the last, Charity, they were counted as brass, or of no value.

This rash, arbitrary act caused his downfall in this place. He lost his own self-respect and confidence. His attendance grew less—the church divided—more than half expressed their approbation of my course, and gave their support and attendance to the Spiritualists. In less than six months he asked to be relieved, and left without any regrets or loss to that society or community. The moral and instruction we draw from the recital of this arbitrary, self-righteous, priestly rule is: the spirit manifest is directly opposed to the spirit of our Government, the Declaration of Independence, and all Christ's teachings; and to the professed doctrines of every Christian denomination, Trinitarians and Unitarians, Calvinists, Methodists, Spiritualists, Adventists, and Mormons. Hence, whoever obstructs or opposes the *practical workings* of Christian democracy, will surely be overthrown or crushed. It has ever been so. It is one of the immutable laws of the universe. Hence I say to the Spiritualists, Beware how you shackle the pen or tongue of any person, male or female, of any race or color.

NATHANIEL RANDALL, M. D.

FALSE MEDIUMSHIP.—A certain Rev. Mr. Jenkins, and a pretended medium calling himself Dr. Church, were discovered in trickery of the basest kind, at Louisville, Kentucky, and were arrested and imprisoned. For two or three weeks they had been giving spiritual seances to audiences of a thousand people, in a dark room, and had made many honest converts. On this occasion Church was tied carefully by an ex-State Senator. Then manifestations were made, thumps were given, musical instruments were played, and kisses were received. But, in the midst of the music three or four matches were suddenly lighted, and there was Church, in the midst of the room, with the accordion. During the singing he had quietly slipped the cords with which he had been bound. Upon this exposure, he pretended to be in a trance, but suddenly bolted for the front door. One gentleman, who had been grossly imposed upon, threatened the life of the humbug. But a compromise was effected. The money was restored to the visitors, and Jenkins and Church were placed in the station-house.

SENSATIONAL.—The religious community of London, according to the *South London Press*, is promised a novelty in the shape of "the smallest Methodist preacher in the world." The latest "sensational" is at present in the Peterborough circuit, where, we are told, he is "laboring with extraordinary success"; so much so, that "in some places where he has been engaged, the numbers have been more than doubled." The reverend gentleman—we suppose he must be so styled—is about an inch taller than Gen. Tom Thumb.

Mrs. CHILD says: "Men more frequently marry for love than women, because women think they will not have a better chance, and dread being dependent. When the husband discovers that he has been picked up as a mere matter of convenience, he doesn't like the trick that has been played on him."

You can buy a bottle of Hall's Pulmonary Balsam for four bits, and one dose will cure an ordinary cold or cough.—*Exchange*.

We tried a dose, and it very nearly cured us. We had ordered a redwood overcoat before we recovered from its effects.—*Woodland News*.

A REVEREND divine, who was but a so-and-so preacher, being called upon accidentally for a sermon, asked a friend what he should preach about; to which the other replied, "about five minutes."

The Next Grand Agitation.

Now that the negro is emancipated, let the philanthropists do something for women. The slavery of the South was scarcely worse than the oppression to which women have long been subjected through the prejudices of society, and the thoughtless cruelty of men; and the condition of a slave on an average plantation is far better in respect of physical comfort, than that of a woman who works twelve hours per day, Sundays included, and earns on an average thirty-three cents. Yet there are said to be twenty thousand women in the city of New York who do this, and there are thousands in every large city but little better off. This is because the supply of female labor, in all those occupations now open to women, is much greater than that of male labor, and this in turn results from the fact that those occupations are so few. The stupid, silly, cruel, canting sentimentalism that prates about woman's true sphere, and ridicules women who seek to earn their bread in some other way than by sewing, teaching, kitchen-work, or keeping boarders, is at the root of the mischief; for it has barred women from many occupations in which they might gain a respectable livelihood, and been the means of driving thousands of them into evil paths. Let true philanthropists commence agitating on this subject; they can accomplish more by enlarging the field of labor open to women, than a score of FEARBODYS, with all their millions. But to accomplish anything requires systematic agitation, and regular organization. Writing and talking are useless without organization. People read or listen, agree perhaps with what is said, declare that "it is dreadful," think "something ought to be done," and go away and forget all about it. Sentimentalists write melodious verses about "our household angel," while in the United States grasping employers are steadily, day by day, working over six hundred thousand women to death. The great majority of working women of New York do not earn on an average over three dollars per week; those that earn four are comfortable, while the runners of sewing machines, who manage to make from five to eight dollars, are opulent. Few of this wretched class ever, except on extraordinary occasions, fully satisfy their appetites on healthy food; they have no recreation or amusement, no time to rest. They rise in the morning only to commence work, and they only stop when it is time to sleep. Sickness is to this class an appalling calamity, that fills the shrinking soul with dismay; for to stop work is to stop eating anything but the bread of charity; and medicines and doctors are luxuries beyond the reach of an income of three dollars per week. The wonder is how these unhappy creatures endure a joyless existence, which is one incessant combat with want, weariness, and misery. That noble woman, ANNA DICKINSON, has commenced agitating this subject at the East. GARRISON commenced the anti-slavery agitation thirty years ago, and we trust she will accomplish as much for her oppressed sex, as the Boston "fanatic" did for the less oppressed negro. She seems to be a resolute, brave woman, thoroughly in earnest, and well qualified, by her freedom from any exaggerated feminine consciousness, for the work she has undertaken. Simplicity, and the absence of any affectation, and of desire for display, appear in all her utterances that we have read. She evidently forgets herself in her work, and rises above all the feelings and intrigues that would in ordinary cases embarras a woman in such a work, or cause her to lower her moral tone in pursuing it. If the anecdote told of her by MARK TWAIN is authentic, the sentimentalists and "women's sphere" philosophers will get a new and feminine handling from her. She was arguing one day, according to MARK, with a self-sufficient youth, solemnly wise, and in all probability a theological student, and he silenced her guns one after another, till at last he staked everything upon the powerful query, "Would you have all women strong-minded?" "No, sir," she thundered, "God forbid! that the means of work and wisdom of our children, the earth, should be doomed to travel its weary ways unimpaired." Here is evidently a woman "with a mission," who is not a mountebank; one who is capable of doing real work for humanity.—*Dramatic Chronicle*.

SHALL WOMEN VOTE?—This question is attracting much attention on the Atlantic side of the Continent. We never could discover any just reason for denying the ballot to women whenever she feels that it is her duty to exercise the right of suffrage. The denial of the ballot to her appears to be merely arbitrary, because we have the power, not because it is just or beneficial.

By the addition of the votes of women, the virtuous, honorable, and high-minded class of voters would be reinforced. Women naturally incline to goodness. Their sympathies are with the right. They instinctively seek to maintain good order, and, in fact, of men of your calibre that the number of good enactments, their votes would be cast in favor of good enactments.—*San Jose Mercury*.

A GOOD JOKE.—The *Sacramento Record* tells the following of a professional gentleman of this city, who has been a bitter anti-Coolie advocate—in fact, he has not only preached, but endeavored to put his preaching in practice—was deceived and badly tricked a few days ago. He had some wood that required to be sawed; no Chinaman could saw wood for him; no, no—no, remarked he, "I say they should not be encouraged." Satisfying his action in his teaching, he employed one of his sons to do the job, and for which he gave him \$2.50. The latter gentleman employed a Chinaman to do the sawing for \$1.25, having the remainder in his pocket, upon which he went down town in circumstances to afford a little spree.

WHAT NEXT?—The Reese-Clark business and the Chandler-Harris prize fight having almost passed out of recollection, the horde who hunger for the description of moral morceaus are growing impatient for a new papulum. They will not have to wait long, however, as we are told that another breach-of-promise case will soon come upon the tapis. Of course the proprietors of our daily papers are looking forward to the new sensation with great anxiety, for

"There is a lust in man no charm can tame,
Or loudly publishing his neighbor's shame,
On vulgar wiles immortal scandal feeds,
While virtuous actions are but born to die."
—*Sunday Mercury*.

THAT dilapidated temple of Thespis, the San Jose Theater, is rapidly undergoing a change, and emerging into an unpeopled carriage-shop. The hammer and saw are now heard where once the ringing voice of "Old Buck," or the mellow notes of Mrs. Leighton or Mrs. Stark fell upon the public ear. No more will the beauty and fashion of San Jose adorn the dress circle of said temple, nor noisy boys munch peanuts in the pit. No more will mimic kings, in glittering tinsel, tread the dusty boards, or fierce ruffians plot the downfall of imaginary innocence. In fact, the bell has rung up the curtain for the last time.—*San Jose Mercury*.

DECADENCE OF QUAKERISM.—Statistics show that the sect of Quakers is so rapidly dying out in England. They have largely given up their ideas of theology. The record of the English Quakers in respect to benevolence and humanity is certainly a good one. In the gift of money for the education of our freedmen, they stand in advance of other denominations in England.

A Challenge to the Clergy.

To the Clergymen of the Pacific Coast:

REV. GENTLEMEN:—I hereby extend a challenge to any one of you whom your religious organization will endorse as being capable of defending your articles of faith, to meet me either in this city or in Sacramento, San Jose, Marysville, or Napa City, in oral discussion on the following questions:

1. Do the spirits of the departed possess power to return and communicate intelligently with their friends in the earth-life?

I taking the affirmative, you the negative. Discuss two days.

2. Are the teachings of Spiritualism immoral in their tendencies, as compared with the teachings of the Bible and Christianity?

You to take the affirmative and I the negative. Discuss two days.

An early reply is desired.

Yours respectfully, BENJAMIN TODD.

The following personal invitation has also been addressed:

SAN FRANCISCO, April 2, 1867.

REV. MR. DWINELL:

SIR:—In the *Sacramento Union* of recent date, I saw the report of a discourse delivered by you, in which you speak in a manner highly derogatory of Spiritualism. I herein challenge you to meet me in an oral discussion, either in Sacramento or in this city, to continue four days, upon the following questions:

1. Do the spirits of the departed possess power to return and communicate intelligently with their friends in the earth-life?

I taking the affirmative, you the negative. Discuss two days.

2. Are the teachings of Spiritualism immoral in their tendencies, as compared with the teachings of the Bible and Christianity?

You to take the affirmative, and I the negative. Discuss two days.

An early reply is desired.

Yours respectfully, BENJAMIN TODD.

We intend to keep the above in a conspicuous place, because some have imagined that the challenge had been withdrawn on account of the temporary absence of Mr. Todd on a lecturing tour in Oregon. It will not be withdrawn for any reason except illness. M.

WHOM SHE WILL MARRY.—Rev. H. A. C. Henderson, who is evidently "stuck after" Mick, after J. Evans, authoress of "Benlah," a pedantic, and "St Elmo," a trashy novel, after drawing a highly colored portrait of the young lady, (in the *Louisville Journal*), writes:

"If she ever marries, it will take a Petrarch, whom no earthly prize can allure from the love of his Laura, to win her heart and hand. I expect she will die the bride of Literature. The man that claims her hand must be high-souled, broad-thoughted, God-devoted, or he may expect a civil rejection." We will wager our clerical friend four little apples, that if Miss Evans ever marries (and she will certainly do so at the first good opportunity), she will give her hand to some brainless spooney, or else to a plausible scamp, who will "make ducks and drakes" of the proceeds of her pen. Female genius generally has a powerful weak spot in the region of the heart.—*Dramatic Chronicle*.

A GOOD STORY is told of an eccentric old gentleman, who, although occasionally addicted to the habit of swearing, was still punctilious in regard to saying grace at his table, and this he never omitted on any occasion.

The story runs, that on a certain occasion the old gentleman invited a sea-captain, a jolly old weather-beaten tar of his acquaintance, to dine with him. They sat down to dinner, and the old gentleman, according to custom, commenced saying grace; but the captain, whose attention had been diverted for the moment, hearing the old gentleman speak, thought he was addressing him, and turned to him with

"What did you say, Squire?"
"Why, d—n, it, man, I'm saying grace!"—*Investigator*.

OIL FOR TROUBLED WATERS.—A veracious old skipper relates to the *New York Herald* that, having been at sea in a dreadful storm, he poured oil on the waves, which moment he calmed, and saved his ship. Five gallons made things all right with furious old Neptune. Here, now, is a strong point for Brother Todd in his difficulties with "Old Theology." It is recollected that, during the tempest which was so miraculously stilled on the Sea of Galilee, the passengers were mainly fishermen. Now, might it not have been that some of these apostolic fish-catchers had brought along a vessel of fish-oil, which, during the tossing of the ship, got broken, thus suffering the oil to "slop over," and soften the rage of the waters? If this point can be established, away goes another miracle!—*Daily American Flag*.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ITALY.—The Italian Prime Minister, Ricasoli, has recently written a manifesto on the question of separation between Church and State. He states that his Government is determined to introduce full liberty of religion as it exists in the United States. The occasion of his letter was an appeal from some Catholic Bishops whom the Italian Government had banished for their plotting against the union of the Italian States.

SOMETHING FOR GEOLOGISTS.—A Montreal paper expresses the opinion that the Madoc gold deposit has got the geologists into the worst scrape they have been in for half a century. A great deal of the metal occurs in lignite, an imperfect coal, precious metal occurs in lignite, an imperfect coal, chert, barley, and other cheap ingredients into his coffee and spices.—*San Jose Mercury*.

ANTI-COOLIE.—The proprietor of a steam coffee and ice mill, San Francisco, advertises that he "never employed any Chinese labor." We suppose he makes up the difference in the price between Chinese and white labor by the introduction of peas, chert, barley, and other cheap ingredients into his coffee and spices.—*San Jose Mercury*.

"MALE."—The *St. Louis Democrat* publishes the names of some five hundred ladies of that city who have signed a petition asking the Legislature of the State of Missouri to strike the word "male" from the constitution, so that women may vote.

The Banner of Progress.

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1867.

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BENJAMIN TODD & CO.
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BENJAMIN TODD, W. H. MANNING, EDITORS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications designed for publication in this paper should be addressed "EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF PROGRESS." All letters in regard to the business of the paper should be addressed to "BENJAMIN TODD & CO."

L. KENDALL.—We cannot use it at present. We have more on hand than we have room for.

Authority and Liberty.

Nothing so much distinguishes the Spiritualist, and liberal thinkers of all grades, as the hearty contempt for authority in matters of opinion which they exhibit at all times. Unlike the credulists and sectarians, they do not pin their faith upon what some religious dogmatist or scientific savant may have said upon a subject, but form and express their opinions in a very independent way, without regard to what may be popular or unpopular, accepted or rejected, for the time being, among the rest of mankind. No amount of abuse or of ridicule moves them, or induces them to abate one jot of their convictions. And the reason of this is, that their skeptical minds proceed upon the fact that free inquiry always has and always will bring positive knowledge upon any subject; while dogmatic assumption and bigoted prejudice stultify the mind and darken the understanding. The Spiritualist, especially, does not advance or accept any doctrine or theory as authoritative, but leaves every man's own experience in his own hands, to convince or refute, as the case may be. It is true that there are certain facts, with which we are all familiar, to which by common consent a name and standing have been given in our minds, upon which a faith may be predicated; but there are as many different methods of understanding and explaining those facts as there are minds capable of receiving them. There is no generally accepted formula of faith, still less a doctrine of practical binding effect, among Spiritualists. In these respects, each is a law unto himself, and each thinks and believes what seems to him best. And in these respects, also, consists the great difference between us and the rest of the religious world. The latter is ruled solely by Authority, both ancient and modern; while we claim the utmost right of human liberty in all matters of opinion. This individuality and independence of dictation from any quarter excites the astonishment of feeble minds, and the indignation of despotic ones. The former need Authority because they cannot form or hold an opinion of their own, and the latter because their desire is to form opinions for, and enforce them in practice upon, others. Our only concern is at present to see that the latter class do not prevail against Liberty of thought and opinion by placing obstacles before us or heaping burdens upon us, by means of Sunday laws and restriction of amusements, or by exciting prejudices against us as a class upon false premises.

There are many writers for the press who attempt to argue upon the subject of Spiritualism, without having had a moment's experience of the phenomenal facts upon which the philosophy is based, or a single correct idea of the philosophy itself. It may be thought that a flippant, facile use of language, and a rapid piling up of words, having no relevancy whatever to what Spiritualists really believe, constitute a refutation of well attested facts, and a complete answer to all arguments in support of our philosophy; but we take the liberty of dissenting from any such conclusion. We are much gratified, however, to perceive that the sticklers for Authority find it necessary now to speak and write in a more argumentative tone than formerly against Spiritualism; for it is an evidence to us that our liberal philosophy is making progress, and that ridicule is found to be no longer potent against it. Something more solid has become necessary, and accordingly the preachers of orthodoxy and the writers of the public press generally have betaken themselves to long sermons and heavy editorials against our heresies. It is noticeable, however, that neither of these—press nor pulpit—venture now to deny positively the existence of the phenomena, or the possibility of their being produced by spirits. Their efforts are now more especially directed to confuting the philosophical and religious corollaries that inevitably follow the acceptance of the premises which the facts establish. Now and then, also, some writer of fair ability, but of excessive egotism, pronounces judgment upon both the philosophy and the believers in it, and sets up his own superior powers of perception as the standard by which the reasoning of others should be gauged. We do not fear this sort of treatment of the subject, or of ourselves, except for its influence upon the unthinking and the feeble-minded. It is thus that prejudice, not opinion, is formed; and it is in this way that stumbling-blocks are thrown in the way of those who lean too much upon the opinions of others.

Of this character are certain remarks which we find in the *Californian*—a sheet of considerable literary ambition, but of not much literary reputation—published in this city. The extracts which we insert below afford fair specimens of the kind of logic to which our opponents are now compelled to resort. The writer even assumes to dictate to us what is the most proper title by which our philosophy should be known. This one thing, of itself, proves that he is wholly unacquainted with both the philosophy and the phenomena; for no one who is well informed upon these will ever be so foolish as to give to the former the name of "Spiritism." We insist not only that the name is inappropriate, but that we have the right to be known by the designation we have adopted. It is at least supposable that we know what we believe; and, this being the case, we claim that we know as well what name is the most appropriate for our belief. But we will make a few quotations, and comment upon them as we proceed. The writer says:

"The belief in the possibility and the actual existence of some sort of intercourse between the material and the immaterial world, is not a new one."

Who, at least among Spiritualists, ever said it was? The constant assertion, with us, is and has ever been the contrary. No Christian dares deny even the fact of such intercourse in the past.

"The question, 'Do spirits appear?' has been a favorite subject for discussion in the debating societies of many successive generations, and we see no reason for believing that it will ever lose its attraction for youthful disputants, until debating societies shall have become obsolete institutions."

We are glad that the debating societies have taken up the subject; we were not before aware that they had done so. There is hope, then, for even the debating societies, when such a subject as the future condition and eternal destiny of the human race engages their attention!

"Neither does it at present seem probable that the question will ever be removed from the field of controversy, by the discovery of evidences or arguments so conclusive as to leave no room for reasonable doubt."

Indeed! how does he arrive at his probability? Are all discoveries to cease, in order that evidences of the truth of Spiritualism may not accumulate? We think they will not cease, so long as the road of free inquiry is open to all.

"About the middle of the present century, the subject evolved a new phase, in the rise of modern Spiritualism, more correctly, of modern Spiritism. This system, or belief, has spread with great rapidity, and made numerous converts, but none among the class of minds whose verdicts are potential in the world of philosophy and science. Its proselytes, indeed, are by no means confined to those whom it would be accurate to class as ignorant or illiterate; on the contrary, the great bulk of them consists of men and women possessing a considerable share of intelligence and culture—enough to enable them to take an unaffected interest in questions of an abstract and semi-philosophic character, though not enough to give value to their reasoning or conclusions on such questions. It is from this very class, that a system like that of Spiritism might be expected to draw its recruits. Entire ignorance is often quite as effectual a protection against delusion as great knowledge. It is those who are respectable for intelligence and acquirements, who are readers but not thinkers, whose minds are busy but untrained, and keen rather than powerful or capacious—it is always such as these that prove the readiest dupes of the plausible hierophants of new religions and new philosophies."

We have refrained from emphasizing with italics any portion of the above precious bit of logic, because we think any reader of ordinary capacity can detect its sophistries. Its special plea for Authority, in requiring a "potential verdict" from scientific minds, while it is notorious that such minds have never yet been able to render any verdict at all in the matter, sounds very ridiculous. Did not Professor Hare—who, up to the moment when he became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, was acknowledged to be one of the greatest scientists of the age—did he not seek by thorough investigation to obtain and render a "potential verdict" against Spiritualism? And did he not feel compelled to render one against all his previous convictions and even wishes? And if it be asked why other savants have not done the same, the answer is simple enough. It is because they have not investigated the subject, or dare not give the results of their investigations. Where is the Howard College Investigating Committee, with Professor Felton at its head, and Professor Agassiz at the other end? When will they make their report, or their "potential verdict" on the manifestations witnessed at the seances of Mrs. Ada Hoyt Foye? We have waited for their "verdict," lo, many years, and yet it does not come.

According to this writer, those who possess "a considerable share of intelligence and culture" do not possess "enough to give value to their reasonings or conclusions on such questions." And again: "Entire ignorance is often quite as effectual a protection against delusion as great knowledge." We had thought differently. We have been of the opinion that the greater the ignorance, the more easily were the ignorant deluded. But this philosopher is evidently ahead of our time, and of all future times. He says also that "those who are respectable for intelligence and acquirements, who are readers but not thinkers," "busy but untrained," "keen rather than powerful or capacious"—"prove the readiest dupes."

This is the first time in the history of Metaphysics that keenness and respectable intelligence have been represented as qualifying their possessors to become dupes! The philosopher of the *Californian*, then, is the deep "thinker," who feels himself qualified and commissioned to enlighten us with this new metaphysical subtlety! What a beautiful accomplishment it is to be a ready writer—to be able to string together sentences of so much brilliancy and logical accuracy as the above!

Here follows another appeal to Authority:

"For nearly thirty years the 'phenomena' have been witnessed, in public and private, in every considerable community in the land, and nothing has been settled; and the old question, 'Do spirits appear?' seems as far as ever from a decisive solution. True, we are assured that hundreds of thousands of proselytes have been made, but among them all there is not a single name that carries, or that ought to carry, the weight of authority on such a subject. Judges, and legislators, not a few, and even a Congressman or two, are said to be included in the list of the more illustrious converts; but American Judges and Congressmen are by no means the class of persons who are best qualified to investigate understandingly and thoroughly the phenomena of a system that occupies a position on the mysterious debatable ground disputed between psychology, physical science, and supernaturalism. The opinion, after due examination, of a single man of science and scientific training, like Dr. Draper, Dr. Holmes, Professor Agassiz, Dr. Youmans, or any other eminent savant, would be more valuable, and would deservedly carry greater weight with it, than that of all the members of Congress and all the members of the Supreme Court of the United States to boot. But no man of this stamp has ever given his endorsement to Spiritism, so far as we are advised."

So far as Dr. Holmes is concerned, his belief in Spiritualism is outspoken and sincere. As to Dr. Youmans, we want no better advocate of our fundamental doctrines than he. But if neither of the above named gave his assent to Spiritualism, it would prove nothing as against the positive testimony of others just as intelligent as they. It does seem, from the tenor of a portion of the above extract, that the writer conceives he himself belongs to the only "class of persons who are best qualified to investigate understandingly and thoroughly the phenomena" of Spiritualism, which, he says, "occupies a position on the mysterious debatable ground disputed between Psychology, Physical Science, and Supernaturalism." What is Supernaturalism? If there can be any power above, below, within, or independent of, Nature, unless it be the God of Nature Himself, we would like to see and comprehend and measure it. Some

even believe God and Nature are the same. We are not prepared either to believe or to contest this point; but we are unable to see how anything could be supernatural without being unnatural; and an unnatural thing is a contradiction in terms, and therefore an impossibility in fact. Everything that exists does so in accordance with some law of Nature; it must be self-evident, therefore, that nothing can exist that is unnatural.

We pass over, as unworthy of a moment's consideration, all the flings at Spiritualism as a religion, and all the badinage indulged in at the expense of our speakers and mediums. It is sufficiently evident from them that the writer knows nothing of what he is talking about; he is only a retailer of the slanders of others. But he says further on:

"If you inquire as to the condition of the departed, in the other world, or in regard to any controverted point of theology or philosophy, no two responses agree. No nature event has ever been foretold, and we believe there is no authenticated case of any fact being communicated that was not already known to the inquirer."

These statements are simply and totally untrue in every respect, as every investigator knows. The writer only still more exhibits his ignorance of the facts of Spiritualism in such assertions as the above. He then tacitly admits the possibility of spirit communication. Read him:

"Silly as are the 'communications,' we cannot logically aver that they do not come from the disembodied dead. We cannot dogmatize about spirits, because we have no knowledge whatever concerning them. They may, as such a theory seems, deteriorate intellectually after death; or it is possible that the difficulty is in the imperfect power of communication; or, finally, the spirits that assume to respond when the great and unforgotten dead are called for, may be meddlesome impostors who try to pass themselves off as the spirits of the departed. We do not, therefore, undertake to controvert the alleged phenomena of Spiritism, nor deny that they are produced by spirits."

You don't! How, then, about the positive declarations of thousands of good, upright, honest, even religious people, who say they have seen, felt, conversed with, and heard disembodied spirits, in some cases, during their whole earthly lives? Dear sir, you are not "posted," and we pity you. You are making yourself appear ridiculous, and don't know it. After referring to table-tipping, rope-dancing, and spirit-painting, as being utterly worthless, and saying that the performances of departed spirits in poetry and painting are excelled by those in the flesh, and much more to the same purpose, the writer concludes his tirade as follows:

"But if Spiritism is scarcely respectable as a system of divination, it is ridiculous as a philosophy, and utterly contemptible as a religion. Amazing indeed must be the ignorance or the impudence that can seriously institute a comparison between the religious cultus of every illiterate and low-bred savage, and the rhapsodical mysticism of Andrew Jackson Davis, Fishbough, and Harris—that can assure a Congress Hall audience that the faith devoutly held by a Gladstone, a Guizot, a Newman, and a Beecher—a faith revered if not professed by all the best and greatest intellects of our time—is so absurd and so monstrous as to be a fit subject for the scurrilous jests of every illiterate and low-bred charlatan whom Nature has furnished with just enough of intellect to qualify him for vituperation and table-tipping."

There! If we are not scared, after such an array of Authority, and such a denunciation of all who dare dispute its right to reign over the consciences of free, thinking men and women, it is because we have neither reverence nor respect for anything that does not first commend itself to our judgment as a proper subject for our most unequivocal faith and regard. In other words, like all the rest of the world, we must be convinced before we become a convert to any doctrine whatever. To say that the incoherent products of a cloudy intellect, above quoted, have not effected our conversion, is simply to award ourselves the credit of possessing common sense, and an ability to think without the aid of literary scribblers, who imagine themselves qualified to sit in judgment on the well-grounded opinions of their fellow-men, at the same time that they exhibit the most puerile ignorance and the most insufferable egotism in attempting to do so.

"INSATIABLE ARCHER! WOULD NOT ONE SUFFICE?"—After having accused our readers, and, by implication, ourselves, of a want of brains, the bowman of the *Dramatic Chronicle* claims to have wounded us in the heel! We feel grateful, and our wrath subsides, when we reflect what a narrow escape our brains must have had. This bowman should have higher aims, if he expects to reach the brains of his contemporaries. But, not content with his failure in the *Chronicle*, he last week emptied his quiver from the broad columns of the *Californian*. His shafts again fell short, however, and some of them recoiled upon himself. Retributive justice is sure to overtake the wicked.

"TABLES of the Value of Gold and Silver per ounce Troy; also Tables showing the Net Returns from Gold and Silver of Different Fineness, and other Tables useful and applicable to the Wants of Business of this Coast." Such is the title of a beautifully printed quarto, for which we are indebted to the kindness of L. A. Garnett, Esq., Superintendent of the San Francisco Assaying and Refining Works, 416 Montgomery street, (late Kellogg & Hewston.) It is very valuable to those who have much to do with gold, which, fortunately or unfortunately, we have not. To bankers, brokers, assayers, and money-changers generally, it will be found useful, and perhaps agreeable.

SPIRITUALISM IN OREGON.—The Spiritualists of Portland, Oregon, have organized a society called "The First Progressive Spiritual Society of Portland." Mr. Todd has been lecturing during the past two weeks in Oro Fino Hall, which is the largest in the city, and which was filled to its utmost capacity; and at Astoria also. A correspondent writes that Mr. Earle's ministrations have served the cause of Spiritualism more than his own, by the rule of contraries. Mr. Todd writes that the Unitarians in Portland generally attend his lectures and are much pleased with witnessing the heavy blows that orthodoxy receives at his hands.

One of Mr. Earle's psychological subjects in Portland, a lady, expressed her abhorrence at another lady friend openly avowing Spiritualism, when a Jewish lady present remarked dryly that she did not consider it half so foolish as allowing one's self to be immersed in the river on a rainy day!

Are the Tendencies of Spiritualism Immoral?

We will proceed to notice other religious institutions which we are accused of rejecting when we become Spiritualists. We will take up the institution of baptism, and give our objections.

First, it is utterly useless, being nothing more than a mere form, without the least beneficial effect, as it is generally administered. If it were taken with soap, and a good coarse towel, it would be well to have it administered often. How the so-called Christian world can retain such senseless mummery in connection with their religious ideas, and then hold up the Roman Catholic Church to scorn and derision, and yet lay any just claim to consistency, is more than we can tell. But, says the Christian, the ordinance of baptism is a sign of repentance—of a firmly fixed resolution to lead a different life. Grant it; but is it any more so than the saying of prayers, counting of beads, and doing penance by kneeling on peas, or kernels of corn, by the Catholic? We cannot possibly discover any advantage that the one practice has over the other. But, if it is only used as a sign of repentance, why administer it to infants? Even if authority could be found in the teachings of Christ for administering the rite to adults, (which we deny,) we challenge the world to find the least authority for administering the rite to infants. But Christians claim that, in administering the rite to infants, they are consecrating or giving them to the Lord. They have always taught us that we belonged to the Lord anyhow, and that He had a right to do with us as He pleased. They had better out with the true reason at once, and that is, they believe that the new-born infant is a consummate sinner, and totally depraved, and that they have got to do something to steal the march on the old Devil, or it will grow up and continue a sinner, and go to hell at last.

Again, this institution of baptism has caused a vast amount of quarrelling and bitterness among mankind. It has been a matter of contention and strife as to which was right and which was wrong—whether baptism consisted in having a few drops of water thrown in the face of the religious victim by some clergyman, who may be a good man, or, under the cover of his black suit, the most graceless scoundrel that walks the earth unhung—or, whether they must be doused wholly under the water.

Again, it creates a spirit of religious caste, which is despicable and mean. For instance, in Portland, Oregon, there has been a tremendous revival; the different religious societies joined together, led on by the Rev. Earle, and made heavy assaults on Satan's kingdom; they were mad for many days. Near the close of the revival, it being communion-day with the Baptists, all their Christian friends, who had been working with them in saving souls, were there, but not a drop of wine or a crumb of bread would these Baptists give them from their table, simply because they had not been "ducked" entirely under the water. Probably, when these Baptist Christians get to heaven, (if they ever do,) they will want a separate room to themselves, to take their lunch in.

We will briefly notice one or two other prominent religious institutions, and then answer some of the more serious objections, such as free-love and insanity.

The Sabbath school has always, since its introduction in the Christian Church, been considered as the nursery of the Church. Now, we do not object to them simply as *Sabbath schools*, but it is the erroneous teachings which are so indelibly impressed upon the plastic mind of the young, that make them objectionable. We shall never forget our own experience in connection with this subject. Having been placed in one of these schools by our parents almost as soon as we were old enough to lip the name of Jesus, and taught that there was an obligation resting upon us, for which God would hold us accountable, to commit to memory a certain portion of the Bible each week, we dared not do otherwise. But we must frankly confess that it was the most irksome task which was ever laid upon us. We were taught that the Sabbath day was holy, and that if we dared so much as laugh, play, whistle, or anything that our young and exuberant spirits would compel us to do in spite of ourselves, God would be very angry with us indeed, and He might kill us, even before Monday morning; and then that awful "lake of fire and brimstone" would inevitably be our portion. But we do not care to rehearse the erroneous religious teachings of our childhood; for there are times in our life when the ghost-like shadows of our early years come sweeping up to our remembrance with such a strong psychological power, that we seem to be surrounded with the influences of our infantile days, and the same fearful horrors hang like gnomes of evil around our mental horizon.

We claim that Spiritualists have an improvement upon the old system of Sunday schools, in what is called the Children's Progressive Lyceum. The grand object and aim of the Lyceum is to draw out and harmoniously develop the minds of children, instead of cramming them with dry husky, religious fodder, which their minds have no capacity to digest, and which contains no nutriment that is adapted to their growing wants. This institution is rapidly spreading in the Atlantic States, and the happy influences that attend it give promise of crowning it with abundant success. There are two already on this coast, which are in successful operation, and others are in contemplation.

SOME scribbler in the *Californian*, who, we suppose, also writes for the *Dramatic Chronicle*, says Spiritualists use a "jargon" that he cannot understand. Well, he cannot expect us to furnish him with brains, though we suppose, in all charity, that he is not to blame for not having them. We use the English language according to the definitions of Webster, and the arrangement of Lindley Murray. We recommend the study of those works to the scribbler aforesaid.

It is said that in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage. The ministers pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Where would be their marriage fees, if that were the case?

Distinctions of Race not Radical.

In support of what has been already written and published in our paper on this subject, we may be permitted by the patient reader to quote a little more from one of the best writers, tending to prove the assertion in the title of this article. We have directed our investigation principally to the origin and history of the black races, because upon them, for thousands of years has fallen the heavy hand of the oppressor, and against them have been arrayed the prejudices of all the rest of mankind. From the second American edition of Mrs. Somerville's "Physical Geography," chapter 23d, page 436, we take the following:

"Notwithstanding the extreme diversity, personal and mental, in mankind, anatomists have found that there are no specific differences—that the hideous Esquimaux, the refined and intellectual Caucasian, the thick-lipped Negro, and the fair-skinned Scandinavian, are mere varieties of the same species. The human race forms five great varieties marked by strong distinctive characters. Many nations are included in each; distinguished from one another by different languages, manners, and mental qualities, yet bearing such a resemblance in general physiognomy and appearance as to justify a classification apparently anomalous."

On page 437, she remarks of the Caucasian family, that "color is not a characteristic, since they are of all shades, from the fair and florid to the clear dark brown and almost black."

The following is her geographical classification of the Ethiopian nations:

"The Ethiopian nations are widely dispersed; they occupy all Africa south of the Great Desert, half of Madagascar, the continent of Australia, Mindanao, Gilolo, the high lands of Borneo, Sumatra, Timor, and New Ireland. The distinguishing characteristics of this great race are, black complexion, black woolly or frizzled hair, thick lips, projecting jaws, high cheek-bones, and large, prominent eyes. A great variety, however, exists in this jolly race; some are handsome both in face and figure, especially in Ethiopia; and even in Western Africa, where the Negro tribes live, there are groups in which the distinctive characters are less exaggerated. This great family has not yet attained a high place among nations, though by no means incapable of cultivation; part of Ethiopia appears to have made considerable progress in civilization in very ancient times. But the formidable deserts, so extensive in some parts of the continent, and the unwholesome climate in others, have cut off intercourse with civilized nations; and unfortunately, the infamous traffic in slaves, to the disgrace of Christianity, has made the nations of tropical Africa more barbarous than they were before; while, on the contrary, the Foulahs and other tribes who were converts to Mohammedanism 400 years ago, have now large commercial towns, cultivated grounds, and schools. The Australians and Papuans, who inhabit the eastern islands mentioned, are the most degraded of this dark race, and indeed of all mankind."

And she sums up all the tribes of mankind as one family, thus:

"Each of these five groups of nations, spread over vast regions, is accounted one family; and if they are so by physical structure, they are still more so by language, which expresses the universal mind of a people, and is modified by external circumstances. None have a greater influence than the geographical features of the country they inhabit—an influence that is deepest in the early stages of society. The remnants of ancient poetry in the legends of the partake of the gentle and pastoral character of the country; while Celtic verse, and even the spoken language of the Highlander, are full of poetical allusions to war and stern nature. The latter is particularly to be observed in the noble strains of Homer, and in the heroic poems of the early Hindus, added, as new ideas occur, and new inventions are made, till at last language itself becomes a study, is refined and perfected by the introduction of general terms. The improvement in language and the development of the mind have been the result of conquests which have arrived at any degree of refinement, and shows the identity of human nature in every country and climate."

Here we again recur to the theory of development; and we find our views so well supported and enforced by the language of the gifted authoress, that we prefer quoting it, rather than to attempt any argument of our own. She says:

"No circumstance in the natural world is more inexplicable than the diversity of form and color in the human race. It has been a mystery in the annals of the world, for there were giants in the land in those days. No direct mention is made of color at the beginning of the world, but it is implied, 'lest any one finding him should kill him,' may allude to it. Perhaps, also, it may be inferred that black people dwell in Ethiopia, or the land of Cush, which means black in the Hebrew language. At all events, the difference now existing must have arisen after the flood, consequently all must have originated with Noah, whose wife, or the wives of his sons, may have been of different colors, or, as we know, 'Many instances have occurred in modern times, of albinos and red-haired children having been born of black parents, and these have transmitted their peculiarities to their descendants for several generations, but it may be doubted whether pure-blooded white people have had perfectly black offspring. The varieties are much more likely to have arisen from the effects of climate, food, customs, and civilization upon migratory groups of mankind; and of such, a few instances have occurred in historical times, limited, however, to small numbers and particular spots; but the great mass of nations had received their distinctive characters at a very early period. The permanency of type is one of the most striking characteristics of the human race, and proves the necessity to produce a change in national structure and color."

It cannot be expected that, in a series of short newspaper articles, so extensive and important a subject should be thoroughly and exhaustively considered. We have simply aimed to present a few interesting and salient points to the mind of the reader, leaving him to infer from them the whole truth of the matter. We have now said all we desire to express at present on distinctions of race, and hope our neighbor of the *Industrial Magazine*, as well as some who think with him, will have food enough for reflection, if not for conviction, in what we have presented.

ONLY THREE SINNERS SAVED.—The total number of persons baptized in Portland, as the result of Mr. Earle's revival efforts, is three. Those Portlanders are sensible people, most of them.